

Scripture

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EDITORIAL

It may be doubted whether there has ever been such a flood of biblical publications as there is at the present day, and this applies particularly to the Old Testament. In all this activity, Catholics are now taking a full part—whether it be Bible translation, exegesis, history, philology or associated sciences. One cannot be sufficiently grateful for the Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XII, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, on Biblical studies, which since 1943, the year of its publication, has been so powerful a spur and encouragement to further research and investigation. To speak of translations first, one should mention the issue of Vol. I (*Genesis to Ruth*) of *The Holy Bible translated from the original Languages with critical use of all the Sources*, by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1952. A review of this volume will shortly appear in these pages. Meanwhile we extend a hearty welcome to the undertaking, though realising that an appreciable time must elapse before the whole work is complete. This is of course only one of several Bible translations being undertaken in various languages by Catholics, e.g. *La Sainte Bible de Jérusalem*, which continues to appear in fascicles at a great rate, Herder's *Bibelkommentar* and *La Sacra Bibbia*, edited by S. Garofalo.

Of commentaries on the Bible there is a continuous stream. Our own *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* may now take its place beside Continental works already familiar, such as the *Etudes bibliques*, the *Bonner Bibel* and Garofalo's *Sacra Bibbia*—works which until recently tended to emphasise the absence of anything comparable by Catholics in the English language. Certainly the reception accorded to our *Commentary* suggests that it was urgently needed and equally, that we cannot rest there but must follow it up with other publications. In this country a second printing is already in hand, and in the United States the American edition has now appeared.

A considerable number of devotional works on the Bible continue to appear both in French (France and Belgium) and in German (Germany, Austria and Switzerland)—frequently in connexion with the Church's Liturgy. Many of these publications are of high quality—some few tend to stray too far from the path of sober exegesis, but

these are not significant. In general, such publications show that the purpose of the Bible as a means of spiritual nourishment is not being overlooked in the pursuit of Biblical knowledge—while on the other hand one should be careful not to allow one's spiritual interpretation to be separated from the literal sense of Scripture, on which see J. Coppens, *Vom Christlichen Verständnis des Alten Testaments*, Bruges and Paris 1952.

In this country it must be admitted that though a number of worthwhile publications on this subject have been published, in general it attracts less attention than it would seem to require. It is true of course that we possess a great and abundant literature containing spiritual doctrine based on or drawn directly from the Bible, but more new publications are called for—if only to combine the results of the latest Biblical research with such traditional teaching. Here is a matter which will repay careful attention by Catholics.

Obituary. With great regret we record the death of Fr Edmund Power, S.J., who during his last years resided at the Jesuit house of Milltown Park, Dublin. Father Power was for a great many years professor at the Biblical Institute, Rome, where he was a familiar and well-loved friend to generations of students. When he retired from this active life he obviously felt the contrast acutely and must have found it difficult to accustom himself to the comparative leisure of retirement. Accordingly when he was invited in 1944 to contribute to the *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* he accepted with alacrity, and indeed appeared quite tireless in all he undertook. Article after article came from his pen, and he was always ready to step into the breach and write a contribution if someone else fell out. It was noticeable that all the work he produced was of a high standard of scholarship, as one would expect, the ripe fruit of a lifetime of study and teaching, closely reasoned, economical in words and bearing no sign of that deterioration that sometimes comes with age. In fact, it may be said that his work for the *Commentary* gave him a new lease of life. Happily he was spared not only to do all the work he was invited to undertake but also to see the fruit of his labours actually in print, and being welcomed everywhere. He died on 3 August 1953. May he rest in peace.

Annual General Meeting. The Catholic Biblical Association will hold its annual general meeting as usual at the Newman Centre, 31 Portman Square, London W1, on Thursday, 7 January 1954 at 6 p.m. The business meeting should not take longer than about twenty minutes and it will be followed by a paper given by the Rev. R. C. Fuller, D.D., L.S.S., on *The Trial of Our Lord*.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE "CATHOLIC COMMENTARY" TO THE HOLY FATHER

On Wednesday 26 August 1953 I arrived at Castelgandolfo, the Holy Father's summer residence in the Alban Hills, near Rome, accompanied by Fr Michael Collins, O.S.B., the Sub-prior of Newark Abbey, New Jersey, U.S.A., and two friends, Mr and Mrs Wilson. My ticket specified that I alone was to have a private audience, and when I presented it at the foot of the grand staircase to a member of the Papal Swiss Guard my companions were detained there. As soon as I got to the top I spoke to an officer of the Swiss Guard in a mixture of English, French and Italian, begging him to do his best to obtain permission for my three companions to rejoin me. I also asked the help of a gentleman in a light blue suit whom I subsequently discovered to be Signor Felici, the official Papal photographer. Both promised to do their best, but I was not allowed to go down to tell my friends of the efforts being made on their behalf. I was then led through a series of beautiful rooms to one containing a throne which proved to be the room nearest to the Pope's private apartments. There I stood or sat hugging the standard copy of *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (which I had earlier that morning picked up in Marietta's bookshop in the Piazza della Minerva) in its striking blue and white paper jacket, and rehearsed what I would say to the Holy Father. Half an hour passed and I began to feel warm, as the windows were shuttered to keep out the glare of the hot sun. From time to time a monsignor or gentleman-in-waiting would look in, nod and go away. Suddenly I heard the sound of footsteps and I saw the joyful faces of my three companions, who now joined me. Apparently my representations had worked, or it may have been that Mr Etherington-Smith, whom my friends had just telephoned from outside, secured their admission. Anyway, there we were, all four; three of us had driven from England by car and the fourth had come from the United States. It was evident that we were going to have an audience all to ourselves, and our anticipation was raised to the highest pitch. Little was said, and for the most part we remained seated in silence. One of my friends had brought a bag of small pious objects for blessing, and this was placed on the floor beside a chair.

And then suddenly without warning the door beside me opened, and with two monsignori accompanying him the Holy Father appeared. We all four immediately knelt down and kissed his ring in turn. He then signed to us to rise. Holding the *Commentary* open at the title-

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page, and the letter of gift signed by the four members of the Editorial Committee on the page opposite, I said to him slowly and distinctly in English : "Most Holy Father, will you please read this letter and accept this book on behalf of our Committee". The Pope glanced at the letter but did not, I think, actually read it. He looked at the title-page and then at the printed letter-heading, which had the names of the editorial committee printed on it. He asked me if I was the chief editor. I said, "Yes". I pointed out the names of the members of the Committee. He inquired if I was English, and I said, "Yes, from England".

The Holy Father then turned over a few pages and asked what kind of commentary it was. I said that it contained a commentary on the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments. He then said, "I congratulate you and thank you".

"Most Holy Father", I said, "we had prepared a special copy for you, which was sent by aeroplane from London, but which has failed to arrive : so that all I can offer you now is this ordinary copy. But I will have the proper one sent to you as soon as it comes". He said, "This is beautiful, perfect, I congratulate you and I thank you".

He then asked who it was written for, and I explained to him that it was for everyone, for priests, school teachers and scholars too, and that it was meant to be a summary of biblical knowledge down to 1950—"1950?", he said with a smile. "Why not 1952 or 1953?" I replied, "No, Holy Father, that was not possible, because as it contains about 2,000,000 words, the proof-reading and printing took a very long time, about two years, to complete". He then repeated with emphasis, "I congratulate you and I thank you, and I give my very special blessing to you and to all who have worked at it". I then asked, "And to the publishers also?" and he replied, "Yes, and to them also". I then said, "Most Holy Father, may I also ask your special blessing for my own community, for the Prior and for all, and also for the School of which I am the Head Master, the Rector?" He replied, "Certainly, I give a very special blessing with great affection for the Community, for the Prior and for all".

The Pope accepted the book as humbly as if I was conferring a favour on him instead of vice versa. He was so genuinely delighted to receive it and so grateful for it. Nor was he the least perturbed at receiving an ordinary copy instead of the specially bound one and was delighted with it.

BERNARD ORCHARD

*St Benedict's School
Ealing, London W5*

THE PSALM "MISERERE"¹

This psalm, through which thousands of Christians have in all ages expressed their sorrow for their sins, has ever since the last centuries before Christ been ascribed to David who, after being rebuked by the prophet Nathan, sincerely repented of his double sin of adultery and murder. Modern criticism, however, while recognising the penitential tone and the profound religious sentiments of the psalm, considers it to be a late composition by a pious Israelite who, on his sick-bed, prays God to forgive his sins and restore him to health. Thus E. J. Kissane, the latest Catholic commentator of the *Psalms*, writes: "It is a prayer for pardon by one who has to endure grievous bodily suffering which he regards as the due chastisement for his sins". And further on: "If there is nothing in the main part of the poem which compels us to attribute it to David, there is no reason for maintaining that the final verses are a later addition. The whole poem may belong to the period of the exile" (*The Book of Psalms*, vol. 1, Dublin 1953, pp. 224 f.) This is also the opinion of E. Podechard, who rejects the Davidic authorship for the reason that the religious sentiments expressed by the psalmist are higher than those expressed by David when he was rebuked by Nathan (*Le Psautier*, 1, Lyons 1949, 238 f.). J. Steinmann, following in the steps of Podechard, thinks that the psalmist has committed some secret sin, perhaps a blasphemy, therefore not an adultery nor a murder. Consequently, he has fallen ill. Repenting of his sin he prays God to cleanse his soul and to restore him to health (*Les Psaumes*, Paris 1951 (p. 114)). R. Tournay O.P. and R. Schwab carry the origin of the psalm down to post-exilic times and delete the word "from bloodshed" or "from bloodguiltiness" in v.16 which they consider to be a gloss added by a later copyist to make the psalm fit David (*Les Psaumes in La Bible de Jérusalem*, 1950).

The traditional view of the Davidic origin is still held by J. Calès s.j. (*Le Livre des Psaumes*, 1, Paris 1936, pp. 518 f.), P. Boylan (*The Psalms*, 1, Dublin 1936, p. 184), E. Pannier (*Les Psaumes in Pirot-Clamer La Sainte Bible*, 1937), implicitly by Bird (*A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, 1953) and by the Anglican A. F. Kirkpatrick (*The Book of Psalms*, 1914 in *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*). The supporters of the Davidic origin maintain that vv. 20⁴ and 21 were added during the exile, or, at least, before the times of Nehemias.

The question of authorship is important not so much in itself as in its implications. Supposing the psalm to be written by David in the

¹ Ps. 1 in the Vulgate numbering, 11 in the Hebrew.

circumstances indicated in the title, we hear in it the cry of one who is fully conscious of the gravity of his sins, openly confesses them and humbly prays for God's forgiveness. But if the psalm was written by a sick man, who regarded his sufferings as a punishment for the sins which he has, or may have, committed, the psalm becomes a prayer for deliverance from sickness, and the consciousness and confession of sin become, more or less, a literary device meant to support the suppliant's claim to regain his health. Sin, instead of being considered mainly as an offence against God, becomes an obstacle to temporal prosperity and a cause of temporal suffering. The psalmist wants to remove the cause, which is sin, in order to make the effect, which is his illness, disappear. None will deny that the high spiritual meaning that we are accustomed to give to this psalm is greatly weakened by this new interpretation, and in spite of the apparent superiority of the psalmist's confession to David's confession in *II Sam. XII, XIII* (Podechard *op. cit.* p. 238) the real motive for the psalmist's repentance and confession is not so much the consciousness of the gravity of sin as the fear of death. It is therefore of paramount importance to examine more closely the reasons against the Davidic origin of the psalm.

The traditional view is based upon the authority of the title. But the titles of the psalms, as everybody knows, have no infallible authority and may be rejected when there are strong reasons against them. On the other hand, the conclusion of the psalm, which is commonly regarded as a liturgical post-exilic addition, must absolutely be considered as an integral part of the psalm, unless there are solid arguments, independent of the title, against them. Therefore neither the title nor the conclusion have a decisive value in favour of or against the Davidic origin of the psalm.

The question must be decided from internal evidence. The psalm sets before us a sinner who is fully conscious of his sin which he confesses eleven times in nine verses. Sin is represented as an offence against God, not as a mere cause of temporal suffering. The effect of the removal of sin is not material prosperity, but internal joy, a clean heart, God's holy spirit and a steadfast allegiance to God. There is no allusion to sickness, except, perhaps, the mention of the "crushed bones" in *v.10*, which is taken to indicate the severe suffering of the psalmist. But the word "bones" denotes sometimes the whole of man's psycho-physical organism, and "crushed bones" may be simply a metaphor for extreme affliction, moral suffering, oppression. (*Cf. Pss. XLII.11, CII.4, etc.*) The "crushed bones" may therefore denote metaphorically the state of utter despondency and desolation produced by the consciousness of having offended God. Another allusion to sickness

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is said to be the psalmist's cry for deliverance from "blood" (*v.16*), which is taken to mean either "a premature death" (Kissane) or simply "death" as the climax of intense bodily suffering (Podechard, Steinmann). But the Hebrew word, *damim*, never occurs in either of these senses. The plural form *damim* means "blood" (Gen. IV.10-11; I Paralip. XXII.8; Is. IX.4; etc.); "bloodshed" mostly in active sense (II Sam. XVI.8; I Kings II.5; Hos. IV.2; II Sam. XXI.1; etc.); "bloodguiltiness" (Ex. XXII.1; Deut. XIX.10, XXII.8; Lev. XX.9; Ezech. XVIII.13). The first and second meaning are inapplicable to *v.16*; if the second meaning is taken in a passive sense, as in II Kings IX.7, it will practically coincide with the third, and the sense of *v.16* would be: Deliver me from my bloodguiltiness, that is, from the death penalty which I have incurred on account of Uriah's death. In any case the meaning of death as the result of sickness seems to be excluded.

Another argument advanced against the Davidic origin of the Psalm is *v.6*: "Against thee, thee alone, have I sinned". These words, it is said, cannot have been uttered by David, whose sin was certainly a grievous injury both to Bethsabee and to Uriah. But, it may be replied, the Hebrew word *lebhaddh* "only, alone" denotes separateness of things or persons from others of the same kind. Thus in Deut. XXXII.12, "The Lord alone", i.e. with no other god with him; Deut. XXXII.39, "I am alone, and there is no other god besides me"; I Sam. X.19, "God alone (and no other god) has saved you"; cp. also II Kings XIX.15-19; Neh. IX.6; Job IX.8, XIV.4, XXIII.13; etc. Hence the sense of *v.6* is: "Against thee, and against no other God, have I sinned". The psalmist does not necessarily deny having sinned against man, but he simply acknowledges that his sin is an offence against his God (see W. E. Barnes, *The Psalms*, II, 1931, pp. 255 f.). Therefore no solid argument can be drawn from the word "alone" against the Davidic origin of the psalm.

E. Podechard brings forth another argument. The religious sentiment of the psalm, he writes, is much higher than that expressed by David in II Sam. XII. David's conscience remained insensible for at least a year; he did penance for the life of his child, not to atone for his sin and obtain God's pardon (*Le Psautier*, I, pp. 238 f.). Now, it is quite true that the religious sentiment of the author of Ps. LI is much higher than that expressed by David in II Sam. XII, but it is equally true that II Sam. XII does not relate the whole story of David's repentance. It is most unlikely that David, on becoming conscious of the gravity of his sins, expressed his sorrow by the words "I have sinned against the Lord" only, without realising the need for divine mercy, the depth of misery into which he had fallen, and the loss of

internal joy and friendship with God. But those few words sum up the whole story of a repentant soul, and in their brevity are more eloquent than the most diffuse narrative of David's psychological state. Similarly it is most unfair to restrict David's prayer to the preservation of his child's life. David could very well pray God for pardon, and at the same time for the life of his child. Therefore, while one has to admit that the religious sentiments of the psalmist are represented in a different way from those of David in *ii Sam. xii*, one has no right to infer that the situations of the psalmist and David were necessarily different.

Another argument against the Davidic authorship is drawn from the affinities of thought and language between the psalm and the Prophets, especially Deutero-Isaiah. If the psalm depends on Deutero-Isaiah, it is certainly later than the exile. This argument is very uncertain, because the affinities do not go beyond a few expressions that are common in other books of the Old Testament. Thus the "greatness of God's mercy" in *v.3* recurs in *Is. LXIII.7-15*; *Pss. v.8, LXIX.14-17, CVI.7-45*; *Neh. XIII.22*; the "blotting out of sin" in *v.3* and in *Is. XLIII.25, XLIV.22*; *Jer. XVIII.23*; "broken and contrite heart" recurs in *Pss. XXXIV.19, LXIX.21, CXLVIII.3*; *Is. LVII.15, LXI.1*; *Jer. XXIII.9*; *Ezech. VI.9*. It is therefore extremely precarious to establish a dependence of *Ps. li* on Deutero-Isaiah on the ground of these parallel expressions.

But the strongest argument against the Davidic origin is the conclusion of the psalm, which points unmistakably to a time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the walls by Nehemias. Most Catholic interpreters find an easy solution in the hypothesis that the two last verses are a liturgical addition made during the exile or an addition meant to tone down the psalmist's rejection of sacrificial worship. This may be true; in fact the hypothesis is permitted by the Biblical Commission *decre. 1 May 1910*). But in order that this hypothesis may be accepted with confidence, it must be established on solid grounds independent of the authority of the title. So long as these solid grounds are not available, we have no right to reject the final verses any more than the first verses of the psalm. Are there such grounds? Many years ago A. F. Kirkpatrick remarked that "this anticipation of the restoration of material sacrifices in Jerusalem seems a poor ending to a psalm of such profound spirituality" (*The Book of Psalms*, p. 295). Indeed, after the psalmist's pathetic appeal to God's unbounded mercy, his insistent prayer for forgiveness, his sincere confession of sin and firm resolution of a new life, the prayer for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the renewal of the sacrificial worship comes as a jarring note which spoils all the aesthetic

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effect and sublime spirituality of the psalm. If the remark is not too subjective, there is, at least, some probability that the last two verses of the psalm are a gloss.

In conclusion we may say that the arguments against the Davidic authorship of Ps. 11 are not convincing. Although there is nothing in the psalm which compels us to attribute it to David, it is safer to follow a tradition which goes back to, at least, one hundred years before Christ, than to propose explanations that are the product of imagination rather than the result of sound exegesis.

P. P. SAYDON

*Royal University,
Malta*

DR CADOUX ON THE VIRGIN BIRTH

In his *Life of Jesus*¹ (pp. 27-30) Dr Cadoux states that belief in the Virgin Birth is "contrary to the evidence of our *earliest* [his italics] informants". In support of this he alleges that "neither Paul, nor Peter, nor Mark (nor, incidentally, 'John') knows anything about it". This sentence betrays an ignorance of logic. The simple omission by a person to mention a certain fact is in itself no proof that he is ignorant of it. He may have good reason for not mentioning it. For the argument to be valid it has to be shown that, had he been aware of the fact, he must in the circumstances have spoken about it. This is the well-known condition which alone gives force to the argument from silence. In itself the argument from silence is purely negative and proves nothing. We may compare the popular saying that silence gives consent. Silence gives consent only when the person concerned, knowing the circumstances, would and should have spoken had he or she any objection to raise. Now the condition is not fulfilled in the case of any one of the writers mentioned. No one of them sets out to give an account of all that he knew concerning Christ. Each wrote according as the occasion and his purpose demanded. Mark says nothing of the infancy and hidden life of Christ. He begins with the preaching of the Baptist and the baptism of our Lord. He had, therefore, no occasion to mention the Virgin Birth. St Paul's epistles were all occasional. He nowhere gives a compendium of the main facts of Christ's life nor a statement of the articles of Christian belief. And the intention of St John was that his *Gospel* should be supplementary to the other three. There was no call for him to repeat what had been clearly set forth by Matthew and Luke.

Dr Cadoux's second argument is that "both of the two genealogies of Jesus (in Luke and in 'Matthew') are genealogies of Joseph, who—like Jesus himself—is described as a descendant of David, while nothing is said anywhere about Mary being descended from David". In the first place, the two genealogies are given precisely by the two evangelists who do expressly record the virginal conception of Jesus, a fact which makes it plain that they saw no inconsistency between the Virgin Birth and our Lord's Davidic descent being traced through Joseph. In the second place the argument loses sight of the strength of Jewish views of legal paternity. It is not merely that all Jewish genealogies are given through the male line, but that according to the notions current in Israel a man was reckoned to be the father

¹ C. J. Cadoux, *The Life of Jesus*, Penguin Books, 1948.

of a son born to his brother after his death but in his name. This is in accord with the law of the levirate Deut. xxv.5-6. This cannot provide a perfect parallel with the case of Christ for the simple reason that the latter was unique. But the case of Christ is actually stronger than that of a levirate marriage. Joseph and Mary were husband and wife, legally married and the child Jesus was born to Mary during the lifetime of her spouse. If the child of a levirate marriage could be and was reckoned to be the child of the deceased brother, with still greater right could the son of Mary supernaturally conceived, be reckoned the son of Joseph, her husband. Hence the Davidic descent of Christ did not necessarily postulate the Davidic descent of Mary, and it was not incumbent on the evangelists to speak of Mary's Davidic descent. Many authorities, however, from early times, maintain that, as a fact, Mary was of the royal house of Judah; and some see a reference to this in Rom. 1.3, where it is said of Christ that He "was of the seed of David according to the flesh".

Cadoux's third reason is as follows: "If we may judge from what is virtually our oldest manuscript evidence, the original text of the genealogy in 'Matthew' probably ended thus: 'Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the virgin, begot Jesus the so-called Messiah'—an apparent attempt to harmonise two irreconcilable accounts of Jesus' birth". This is a reference to the reading of the Sinaitic Syriac text in Mt. 1.16, but there is no reason to suppose that it gives the true original text against all the Greek codices and the witness of the Latin translation made from the Greek as early as the second century. Even if it were admitted for the sake of argument that we have here the true original text, even so it would not destroy the witness of Matthew to the Virgin Birth, for this Syriac text goes on to give in the rest of the chapter the same account of the Virgin Birth that is found in all the other textual witnesses. Thus the Syriac translator clearly did not intend his phrase to be in contradiction with what he also translated later in the chapter, and will have understood the word "begot" in the legal sense explained above.

E. Crawford Burkitt, a non-Catholic, who was Lecturer in Palaeography at the University of Cambridge and a scholar of international repute, has treated of this question in his book entitled *Evangelion Da Mepharreshe*, II (Cambridge University Press 1904), pp. 258-66. The following quotations give the results of his penetrating analysis. "There can in the first place be no doubt at all that Matthew wishes us to learn that Jesus Christ was conceived by Mary while yet a virgin. This is not a question of textual criticism, of the omission of a word here or there. The whole paragraph 1.18-25 is absolutely based on this assumption. Joseph finds his betrothed with child, but

on the authority of Divine revelation he learns that this has taken place not *ἐκ πονείας* but *ἐκ πνεύματος ἀγίου*. Accordingly he accepts Mary as his wife, and on the birth of the child he accepts the child as his son by naming him, in obedience to the command of the Angel" (p. 259). "If the Genealogy had ended with the uncompromising statement 'and Joseph begat Jesus' it would not prove that the Evangelist believed that Joseph had been the natural father of Jesus. All that the Evangelist cares about is that Joseph accepted Jesus as his son; and further, that Joseph was justified in so doing, because of the exceptional circumstances that had been revealed to him by the Angel" (p. 261). The Sinaitic Syriac text omits in *v.25* the words "knew her not until". On this Professor Burkitt writes thus: "According to the view of the whole matter which has been explained above, the shorter text expresses the meaning of the Evangelist. He was only concerned at this point to assert that Joseph publicly accepted Mary as his lawful wife and publicly acknowledged her son as lawfully born in wedlock" (p. 261).

Finally, writing of the textual criticism of *v.16*, he says: "If what I have said above be accepted, as to the general aim and composition of the Genealogy, the intrinsic interest of the determination of the original text in this passage is considerably lessened. Whatever our decision be, the question is only a matter of literary criticism, not of historical fact" (p. 262). In other words, whatever we may decide to have been the original form of words in *v.16*, it does not teach the supposed naturalistic account of the birth of Jesus.

It may be added that the version given by Dr Cadoux "the so-called Messiah" is a curious and erroneous way of translating words that mean "who was called the Messiah".

We now come to Dr Cadoux's last argument: "Several passages in the second chapter of Luke clearly imply, in their oldest form, that Joseph was Jesus's father. In introducing the genealogy of Jesus, Luke awkwardly describes him as "being, as we supposed, son of Joseph . . ." All this means that each of these two Gospels, although in their present form they both assert (Luke a little dubiously) the Virgin Birth, reveals an older version or basis according to which Jesus was Joseph's son". How Cadoux could think that he was justified in translating "being, as we supposed, son of Joseph" it is impossible to say. The form of the verb in the Greek is impersonal—"being, as it was thought, the son of Joseph" or, as the Revised Version has it, "being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph". The people at large could not possibly have supposed anything else. And this impersonal form is found in all the Greek codices; there is no variant reading. If Cadoux had quoted Lk. II.34-5, he would have put the reader in a

better position to judge whether Luke wrote a little dubiously. In the Revised Version these verses read thus : "And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man ? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee : wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God".

The statement that the oldest form of several passages in Lk. ii imply that Joseph was Jesus's father is a reference to texts which mention "his parents" or call Joseph "his father", and the incautious reader might be led to imagine that such phrases had been carefully eliminated from the traditional text. This, however, is not so. These expressions are found in our current texts. Thus the Latin Vulgate in Lk. ii.33 has "his father and mother", and in ii.4 "his parents". In the general context the sense of these phrases is perfectly clear and is manifested by the passage just quoted from ii.34-5. And they merely reflect the manner of speaking in the Holy Family itself. Thus when our Lady found her Son in the temple, she said to Him : "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (Lk. ii.48). How else could she have referred to St Joseph ? The awkwardness and dubiousness of which Cadoux speaks are not to be found in St Luke's *Gospel*. They must be sought elsewhere.

From a purely human point of view evidence of the Virgin Birth could be given only by our Blessed Lady and St Joseph. Supposing the *Gospel* had contained an explicit testimonial from one or both of these witnesses, it would still have been possible for the incredulous or carping critic to assert that such a text only reflected the belief of a later generation of Christians. One is reminded of the saying that people who will not listen to Moses and the prophets, would not believe if someone should rise from the dead (Lk. xvi.31).

EDMUND F. SUTCLIFFE, S.J.

*Heythrop College,
Chipping Norton, Oxon*

JONAS AND THE "WHALE"

The *Book of Jonas* belongs to the collection of the twelve minor prophets. Though most of these prophets are more or less unknown to the public at large the figure of Jonas is very familiar. Whether this is due to the story itself, which may strongly appeal to the imagination, or to the fact that the prophet's name and fate are mentioned by Christ Himself in the N.T., or to the use made of this book by unbelievers in the past (and present) to ridicule belief in the Bible, is uncertain. The fact is that Jonas and the "whale" (the text speaks only of a "great fish") are well known, and what is further told in this book about Jonas is almost forgotten. Thus attention was focused on this particular detail, it was singled out of the whole book, and interpreters lost sight of its meaning for the subsequent development of the story. In reaction to the opposite view the defenders of the Bible clung to the historical character of this detail, duly emphasising that the miraculous aspect of this event was not a sufficient reason to deny it, but unduly exaggerated the import of Christ's reference to this same detail as an assertion of its historicity. All this is reason enough for stressing the importance of this booklet.¹ Hence it forms a separate volume in the *Bible de Jérusalem* with an unusual proportion between the text of the book (8 pages) and its introduction (20 pages). The length of the introduction is a real recommendation for this publication, and the name of A. Feuillet is another. He is well known as a scripture-scholar through several of his publications dealing with the O. and N.T.² The present publication has been preceded by others of the same author on the same subject.³ Nowadays more attention is paid to the use of literary forms in the Bible, and generally it is admitted that, as far as inspiration is concerned, it is an open question, whether the *Book of Jonas* is to be taken as fiction or non-fiction.¹ Yet if the Book is commonly reckoned as historical, one must have solid arguments to prove the contrary. In principle the whole question turns on the following: What did the inspired author intend to say by writing his book, in particular the *Book of Jonas*? Did he

¹ *Le Livre de Jonas*, trans. A. Feuillet, P.S.S. (Editions du Cerf, Paris 1951, pp. 34).

² How Feuillet's thorough knowledge of the O.T. enabled him, e.g. to explain a difficult passage of the N.T. can clearly be seen in the articles of A. Jones in *Scripture*, IV (1949-51), pp. 222 and 264.

³ See his articles "Les sources du Livre de Jonas" and "Le sens du Livre de Jonas", in *Revue biblique*, LIV (1947), pp. 161-86 and 340-61; and on "Jonas" in Vigouroux's *Dictionnaire biblique*, Supplement, IV, 1104-38.

¹ See E. F. Sutcliffe, s.j., in *Cath. Comm. on Holy Scripture*, Edinburgh 1953, §§ 531e, and A. Jonas, *Unless a Man show Me*, London, 1951, p. 49.

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mean to relate historical facts and draw a lesson from these, or did he, having it in mind to teach some particular point, invent the story for this purpose? One may stress also that some particular point which the author had in view, might have been meant first and foremost for his contemporaries. A solution is not easy to find, and one should proceed with great care. A thorough study of the original text of the book, of its contents, of its possible relation to other books of the Bible, of its background, and so on, is necessary. It is a pity that often an opinion is formed in accordance with and under the influence of the common idea, without even reading the book, let alone really studying its original text.

Feuillet emphasises already in the very beginning of the introduction the peculiar character of this book in comparison with the rest of the prophetic writings: it is not a collection of oracles, nor does it deal with the whole ministry of Jonas, but it relates a particular mission of this prophet to Niniveh. A prophet of the same name occurs in II Kings XIV.25, and it seems natural to suppose that he is the same as the main figure of the book in question. Hence it follows that the story must have taken place in the eighth century. Now the difficulties arise (p. 7)! Feuillet admits that the author of the book is unknown, and that it must have been written after the fall of Niniveh (612 B.C.). The most fitting time both for philological and theological reasons is the post-exilic time, especially the period of Esdras and Nehemias (fifth century; pp. 8-9). He maintains the unity of the book and dismisses the arguments in favour of a different author for chap. II as insufficient (pp. 9-10).

The introduction reaches its climax with the question of the literary form. The different points of view are dealt with one by one. The most common opinion, at least amongst Catholics, is that the *Book of Jonas* is historical. Yet there is a new tendency. Scholars in general and some amongst the Catholics¹ hold now that this book is fiction of didactic character. A. Feuillet sides with them, emphasising that it is not unwillingness to accept miracles, but the peculiar character of the book itself, which brings him to this conclusion. All the indications taken together create a very great probability, not to say a certainty, for this view (p. 11). The arguments are the late composition of the book and its general appearance, the artificial character of the miraculous element and the accumulation of unlikely things. It is worth while to mention that amongst the last, one does not reckon the great fish, but the fact of the sudden appearance of a Hebrew

¹ Richard Simon (1712), Gigot (1906), Van Hoonacker (1908), Tobac (1921), Dennefeld (1924), Feuillet (1947). See A. Jones, *loc. cit.* D. Deden, S.C.J., in *De Kleine Profeten*, Roermond 1953, p. 180, mentions also Lesêtre and Condamin.

prophet of the eighth century in the heart of Nineveh as a preacher of God's justice, and the immediate conversion of the whole of this city. The latter, if taken as a historical fact, is a much greater miracle than that of Pentecost (p. 12).

The most serious objection against the given explanation is the witness of Christ. Yet one must admit that the details of the swallowing of Jonas by a great fish and of his deliverance are utilised by Christ as figures of His burial and of His resurrection, and the detail of the conversion of the Ninevites on the preaching of Jonas, as a sign to announce by contrast the condemnation of the unbelieving Jews. Now whether these details are fact or fiction, they keep, in any hypothesis, the meaning which Jesus gives to them (p. 13). The patristic tradition cannot be invoked, because this is not a question of faith or morals, but a purely exegetical one: the literary form of a book (p. 13). Feuillet, however, did not neglect the study of the Fathers, as pp. 13 and 25 sufficiently show. Thus the author comes to the conclusion that the whole book must be taken as pure fiction, with perhaps an allegorical element, but it comes much nearer to the character of a parable. He prefers to call it a didactic fiction (p. 15).

What was, however, the intention of the inspired author, and was he influenced by other inspired writings? Here Feuillet finds the clue for his explanation: Jonas is the book of a learned man, well acquainted with the previous writings; he utilised them constantly for a very special purpose (p. 18). He meant to give an explanation of the non-fulfilment of "the prophecies against the nations", pointing out that even when they have the strongest evidence of divine origin, and are expressed in an absolute way, they remain always conditional (p. 19). For this theological doctrine as well as for many of his expressions the inspired author is greatly indebted to Jeremias (cf. esp. Jer. xxxvi and Jon. iii). At the same time he intended to criticise that particularism of mind which found in the mere election of Israel sufficient ground to count on Jahweh, and which expected impatiently the destruction of the gentiles. There was something better to do than to complain about the continued existence of the enemy nations: one ought to convert oneself (pp. 20-1). Here again the author is dependent on Jeremias (cf. esp. Jer. xviii.7-8), but to inculcate his lesson deeply he makes an ironical use of Ezech. xxvii (the oracle against Tyre) and of 1 Kings xix, esp. vv.4, 9 (words of the prophet Elias). After all, the only uncongenial type in the whole story is Jonas himself (p. 20). The book teaches by contrast a broad universalism, and Feuillet gives it its proper place amongst the several types of universalism, expressed in the other books of the O.T. (p. 23). All this, the sources the author used and the doctrine he proposed, can be found explained in detail

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on pp. 15-24 of the introduction. In the last paragraph Feuillet remarks that if one admits the given explanation of the miracle of the fish, namely, that it is in the mind of the author a sign that Jonas is a true prophet and that his mission comes from God, one can easily understand why Christ referred to it in connexion with His resurrection. For Christ's resurrection too was a sign authenticating His mission (p. 25).

These few notes may suffice to draw attention to a masterful piece of exegesis, presented in a very attractive way. One may ask whether this explanation will be accepted by other Catholic authors. Fr Jones¹ gives very impartially the arguments of the two opposite views (fact or fiction) and comes to the conclusion that the question is not yet solved. Granting the dependence of Jonas on Jeremias and Ezechiel, he still maintains the possibility of underlying historical facts of the eighth century. I would say, however, that although neither the didactic character of a book nor its dependence on previous writings form a sufficient argument to exclude fact, yet the satirical or ironical character of this book is certainly in favour of taking it as pure fiction. D. Deden S.C.J.² fully accepts the view of A. Feuillet, and Mgr E. J. Kissane³ in his sympathetic review of the recently published *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* writes: "Some may think that the writers of the articles on Jonah, Tobias, Judith and Esther are somewhat over-reluctant to give up the strictly historical character of those Books".

W. M. VALK, S.C.J.

*St Joseph's College,
Malpas (Cheshire)*

¹ See A. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-68, esp. 59-60. All those who are interested in the doctrine of inspiration and its application to some of the difficult questions of the O.T. should read this highly commendable book.

² See Deden, S.C.J., *op. cit.*, pp. 180-2.

³ See *Irish Theological Quarterly*, xx (1953), pp. 210-11.

THE BIBLE IN FRANCE

Since 1950 more than 300,000 Catholic Bibles have been sold in four new French translations.

The Jerusalem Bible takes first place, both on account of the quality of the translation and because of the importance of its introductions, as readers of *Scripture* are already aware from the reviews of this Bible which have appeared in its pages. But it is expensive. The publishers intend to bring out an edition in one or two volumes, with introductions and shorter notes, once the whole Bible has been issued in its present form. One would wish that in this future "popular" edition the notes should be touched up so that the lay reader might be furnished with material of a theological and spiritual character—material which is somewhat lacking in some of the fascicules of the present edition.

The Maredsous Bible, very well produced, both in the large and small editions, has also good introductions¹ and sober and useful notes.

The Lille Bible, or *Cardinal Liénart's Bible*, is the most widely circulated of recent editions. It has adopted the translation of the Pirot-Clamer *Commentary*. Its literary value is uneven and the small print may be trying for some people. But the translation is well done. A glossary and chronological tables supplement the brief notes, and short introductions prepare the reader to understand the books of the Bible. Its price is very modest, about 700 francs.

The success of these Bibles has induced the publishers of the well-known *Crampon Bible* to bring it up to date and reduce its price from 1,800 to 1,260 francs. It has been completely revised, and the revision has been specially successful in the Sapiential Books and the Prophets. The new "Crampon" has numerous notes and well-informed introductions. Unfortunately the summaries at the beginning of each section, which were so useful, do not appear in the new edition.

This widespread circulation of the Bible raises serious problems for the clergy as well as for the faithful. The present taste for Bible-reading could involve a real danger, if it were not accompanied by an effort at genuine and methodical instruction. Hence it is that various other publications have appeared aiming at precisely this.

For the faithful in general, the *Ligue Catholique de l'Evangile* has already organised, in several dioceses, Bible Exhibitions where visitors may see and understand everything concerning the Scriptures themselves, as well as their geographical, historical and cultural background.

The same society has, since 1951, been publishing the *Cahiers*

¹ Cf. *Scripture*, v (1952), pp. 76-7.

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Evangiles.¹ This pleasing quarterly review, costing only 380 francs a year, studies a particular theme in each number, and in a simple, living way, usually well adapted to the needs of the spiritual life. Here are some of the titles : "How to read the Bible" (No. 1), "Bible and Gospel" (No. 2), "The prophets and Christ" (Nos. 3 and 4), "The God of the Poor" (Nos. 5 and 9), "Paul and his life" (No. 7).

From a different point of view, a parish priest of the diocese of Dijon² has begun to publish a series of commentaries, popular, simple, without any scientific apparatus, *Pas à pas avec la Bible*. Three of the forty fascicles planned have already appeared, namely, Introduction, *Genesis*, *Apocalypse*. The editor of the series has secured the services of a number of reputable exegetes. At the same time he has managed to steer clear of the more technical problems and give in a simple and vivid manner the essentials which allow the ordinary faithful to read their Bible with spiritual profit. These little books, clearly written, short, and of modest price, will be highly useful to Catholics in general.

The faithful will always, however, stand in need of advice and direction from their priests ; the kind of instruction and inspiration which they would naturally look for in those trained in theology and the spiritual doctrine and whose lives are wholly dedicated to their Master. Can it be said that the French clergy adequately respond to this expectation ? Certainly the means are there for them to develop, or, it may be, to take up once more, the studies which occupied them in the Seminary.

There are, first, excellent introductions, among which one may single out for mention *Aux sources bibliques*, by the Abbé Joly,³ a small practical volume which puts the Sacred Books in their historical setting and brings out well the significance of the events and personages of the Old Testament, their characteristic features and their Messianic importance.

Problèmes d'Ancien Testament, by A. Gelin,⁴ deals specially with the matter of Biblical inerrancy, sets out and comments on the various directives issued by Rome on this matter, especially such as concern the different senses of Scripture, the relation of the Bible to science, literary forms.

A review recently appeared in *Scripture* of Dom. C. Charlier's work,⁵ which is an excellent aid to the reading of the Bible. Without

¹ *Cahiers bibliques "Evangile"*, 2 rue de la Planche, Paris, (7^e).

² Pierre Israël, La Roche-en-Brénil (Côte-d'or).

³ *Aux sources bibliques. Guide de lecture de l'A.T.* Fleurus, Paris, 1951. 300 fr.

⁴ A. Gelin, P.S.S., *Problèmes d'Ancien Testament*. Vitte, Paris-Lyon, 1952. 240 fr.

⁵ *La Lecture chrétienne de la Bible*, Maredsous 1950. 495 fr. Cf. *Scripture*, v (1952),

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any technical apparatus (unfortunately without references either) it deals with the traditional questions of introduction, and above all endeavours consistently to show in what spirit a Christian should approach the Sacred Books.

Besides the above works, one should also mention the numerous articles on the Bible which are to be found mostly in periodicals for the clergy, such as *Ami du clergé*, *Vie spirituelle*, *Maison Dieu*, *Nouvelle revue théologique*, *Lumière et vie* and many others. Special mention should be made of *Cahiers sioniens*, which have devoted a special number to *Abraham Father of Believers* (June 1951) and another by Père Démann to *The Christian Catechesis and the People of the Bible* (Dec. 1952).¹

Recently the monks of Maredsous, under the patronage of Belgian, Canadian and French Cardinals and Bishops, have begun publication of a new quarterly review "de doctrine de spiritualité et de pastorale biblique", *Bible et vie chrétienne*.² The first number appeared in April 1953. The general level of the review appears to be between the *Revue biblique* and the *Cahiers Evangiles*: that is to say, it is designed in the first place for priests engaged in the ministry who have to put their people in sure touch with the Word of God.

Finally, one may say that Biblical Days and Sessions become more and more frequent—as for example during priests' retreats—and one can only thank God for inspiring so great a fund of goodwill and ask Him for grace to remain always faithful to His Word and to His Will.

R. TAMISIER

*Grand Séminaire,
Rodez, Aveyron, France*

¹ *Cahiers sioniens*, 68 rue N.-D. des Champs, Paris-(6^e). "Abraham père des croyants", préface de S.E. le Cardinal Tisserant (300 fr.). "La Catéchèse chrétienne et le peuple de la Bible", préface de S.E. le Cardinal Saliège (450 fr.).

² Casterman, Paris (abonnement 800 fr.), and Blackwell, Oxford, £1.

A NOTE ON COCKCROW

The biblical interest of cockcrow arises chiefly from St Peter's denials ; but both have to be taken into account in the attempt to determine the time-table of the Passion. In general it may be said that wherever there are cocks there is presumably a crowing of cocks at dawn. Certainly it is so in Palestine. It is the first light that usually sets them going, though other causes may also produce the same effect, such as the noise of planes or other atmospheric disturbances. Indeed when I was at Jerusalem, having read different accounts of the matter in different books, I asked a Dominican father of the Ecole Biblique, what was the real truth, and he replied with a smile that he would be prepared to produce cockcrow at any time desired. All that was needed was to go out with a lighted lantern.

Thus there is a more or less standard time for cockcrow, fixed by sunrise, but very little is needed to start an individual cock, which may in turn start the whole band. When indeed the first cock will start, cannot be determined with certainty. This has some relevance for our Lord's prophecy of Peter's denials, for obviously He was referring to the first cockcrow, which could not be foretold by natural means with any exactness. Hence the crowing of the cock immediately after Peter's denials (Mk. xiv.72, Mt. xxvi.74, Lk. xxii.60, Jn. xviii.27) was the fulfilment of what was beyond doubt a prophecy, though this might also have been said of it even had the time of cockcrow been absolutely fixed and uniform.

Père Lagrange in his work *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ* (Paris 1946, p. 542, n. 6) remarks that he has often watched for the first cockcrow at the beginning of April and that it varies much in time, but that 2.30 a.m. seems the earliest time for it. Elsewhere (*Evangile selon St Marc*, 1947, p. 385, n.30) he writes that at Jerusalem at the end of March and the beginning of April the cock can be heard very early but especially perhaps about 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. It seems best to adopt the earlier time, about 3 a.m., as the most likely ; it squares best with the 2.30 a.m. already mentioned, and at the same time allows for it being already night when Judas leaves the supper room (Jn. xiii.30).

This was at an early stage of the Last Supper, which must have lasted rather a long time, as did likewise the Agony in the Garden and the trial before the Sanhedrin, although our Lord may have been kept a prisoner for some time by the latter before being taken to Pilate in the morning. When Pilate finally delivered Him up to be crucified it was about the sixth hour (Jn. xix.14), that is about midday

—earlier rather than later, in the light of Mk. xv.25, which shows that 'the Way of the Cross' cannot have taken long.

The late Israel Abrahams, at the end of his article "Time" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, remarks that although the Jewish division of the night into three watches continued into post-Roman times the Roman division into four watches was also known, and he cites Mk. xiii.35 (evening, midnight, cockcrow, morning). One gets the impression from the names that the real midnight fell inside the midnight watch and not at its end, and similarly that cockcrow fell inside the cockcrow watch; for if this last began at midnight, it might be too early even for the first cock. What all the evangelists insist on is that Peter denied our Lord thrice before the cock crow. Only Mark mentions that the cock crew twice (Mk. xiv.30, 72)—one of those little details which he probably learnt from Peter (*cf.* iii.5, *vv.*3-5).

It was probably from the New Testament that cockcrow came into ecclesiastical use. Ducange (*Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, ed. Henschel, Paris 1845) quotes from an early Gospel text, *Tertio pullo ter me negabis*, and elsewhere *circa pullorum cantum extinctum est lumen candelae*; and there are other such quotations. *Plygain* in Welsh is translated in Spurrell's dictionary "cockcrow, daybreak, dawn, matins"—this last word showing the ecclesiastical influence at work. The corresponding word in Breton, I have read somewhere, is *pelgent*. Both stand for *pulli cantus*.

In the Gospel accounts the first and third denials of Peter are fairly definite. The first (Mk. xiv.66-68a; Mt. xxvi.69; Lk. xxii.56-57; Jn. xviii.17-18) to a maidservant (Mk. xiv.66, Mt. xxvi.69, Lk. xxii.56) who was the portress (Jn. xviii.17). The third (Mk. xiv.70b-71, Mt. xxvi.73-74, Lk. xxii.59-60, Jn. xviii.26) embraces a more general attack on Peter by the bystanders, partly based upon his Galilean pronunciation (Mk. xiv, Mt. xxvi, Lk. xxvi.69) and supported by Malchus's relatives (Jn. xviii.26). The second denial is more indeterminate, and seems to be rather a group of denials, including one to the same maid-servant (Mk. xiv.69-70a), to another maid-servant (Mt. xxvi.71-72) and to the "other person" of Lk. xxii.53, who may have been the relative of Malchus (Jn. xviii.26).

Luke places about an hour's interval (xxii.59) between the second and the third denial. This may be due to his reckoning the "hour" from the one particular incident which he has mentioned as the second denial. But in general we must remember that the reckoning of time in the New Testament period was far vaguer than in our own. Nowadays we may find somebody concerned because his watch is just a few minutes out; one is tempted to say that in New Testament times it

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was the hour rather than the minute that mattered. St Paul writes in Gal. 11.5, "Not for an hour did we yield to them" where we should be more likely to say "Not for a minute", or even "Not for a second". Indeed Moulton and Milligan (*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 1930) under *ὥρα* ("hour") say "As the hour was the shortest period of time known to ancients, *ὥρα* came to be used much as we use 'in one second', 'instantly'."

C. LATTEY, S.J.

*Heythrop College,
Chipping Norton, Oxon*

CATHOLIC BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ST PAUL'S LIFE AND WRITINGS

INTRODUCTORY

This bibliography is intended to supplement that published in *Scripture*, I (1946), 61-5 (compiled by Mgr John M. T. Barton) and follows the same general lines. It comprises works published since 1946 and other material, chiefly articles in periodicals, not included in the previous list.

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G. GRAYSTONE, S.M.

Mount St Mary's,
Milltown, Dublin

CATHOLIC BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ACTS,
CATHOLIC EPISTLES AND APOCALYPSE

INTRODUCTORY

This bibliography is intended to supplement that published in *Scripture*, II (1947), 53-7 (compiled by Rev. A. Theissen D.D.). It comprises chiefly works and articles published since 1946.

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i John

T. E. BIRD, "A difficult passage in the Epistle for Low Sunday", in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, xx (1922), 235.

A. BLUDAN, "Comma Johanneum (i John v.7)", in *Irish Theological Quarterly*, xvii (1922), 128, 201.

Apocalypse

R. J. LOENERTZ, O.P., *The Apocalypse of St John*, Eng. trans. by H. Carpenter, O.P., Sheed and Ward 1947.

G. GRAYSTONE, S.M.

Mount St Mary's,
Milltown, Dublin

BOOK REVIEWS

Dom Jacques Dupont, o.s.b., *Essais sur la christologie de saint Jean*. Éditions de l'Abbaye de Saint-André, Bruges 1951. Pp. 319. 100 Belg. fr.

These four essays were originally prepared for the instruction of theological students. For this reason they are presented without the support of detailed analyses and developments. Yet under the modest appearance there is thought of a deep originality, exercised in applying a chosen method of exegesis to St John's doctrine on Christ. The Johannine teaching is interpreted against its authentic background to the exclusion of Hellenistic influences; its roots are sought in the literature of the Old Testament, of Judaism, and of primitive Christianity. The approach is positive, not polemical; and the clarity of the exposition is admirable. The conclusions are, however, somewhat surprising, and will attract much interest from both theologians and exegetes. Similar studies are to follow, which will lead eventually to a general work on the Christology of the New Testament.

Each essay considers one of the master-ideas of Johannine Christology: the Word, the Light, the Life and the Glory of Christ. These are analysed in their various aspects by tracing them as literary themes from the Old Testament, through later Judaic writings and the earlier New Testament books, to their formulation and development in St John. It is impossible even to summarise here the many points made by the author, but his main conclusions on the meaning of these fundamental ideas must be noted.

The term "Logos" is not applied to Christ as an indication of His divine nature; it has a functional significance. In calling Jesus the Word, and not only the bearer of God's word, John does not intend to define the transcendent nature of the Son of God or to determine the mode of His divine origin. He is not giving Him a proper and personal name, but expressing the role that Christ has in regard to the world and to men.

The moral and Messianic content of the idea of Light is brought into clear relief. It is then asserted again that John's Christology is functional. Christ is not called the Light because of His Person or essence; the name is given to Him on account of His role as Saviour and Liberator in our regard.

The theme Life has a longer treatment. The conclusion emerges that in St John the notion of life retains an eschatological sense. The

life that Christ brings to believers is the life that is reserved to the elect in the world to come. It is true that John adds to the original theme the conception of a present possession of it in this world, but he does this without altering the content of the idea in itself. This present possession of eternal life does not mean that it is made interior, that it is conceived as a life of the soul, as a supernatural life of grace. In itself it remains the eternal life to be enjoyed in the next world. It is said to be actually possessed because John sees Christ as anticipating already to some extent during His life His eschatological mission. He gives life to men from now, but a life to be lived only hereafter. When Christ Himself is said to be the Life, once more it is His function and mission that are described, and not an intrinsic attribute of His being.

The Glory that Christ manifests is not envisaged by John as a property belonging to His divine nature; he conceives it as a prerogative attached to His mission.

This recital of conclusions does not, of course, do justice to the author's exposition; it does not convey the valuable insight he shows in the investigation of many a point. It is refreshing to read an examination of Johannine thought that leaves aside supposed alien influences and restores it to its true atmosphere and environment. The application of the principle is perhaps too rigid and exclusive, but it is itself undoubtedly sound. The handling of John's thought itself, as distinct from its background, calls for far more reserve. The ease with which the author empties that thought of much of its traditional content is remarkable. No-one would deny that later theology has built into the structure many elements not intended by John himself. On the other hand, it is equally true that a writer may considerably transform a traditional literary theme. Now while this book is quite thorough in tracing the sources, the analysis of John's writings in themselves must be dubbed cavalier, if the conclusions stated so exclusively and decidedly are borne in mind. The work needs to be supplemented and corrected by another, retaining indeed the general approach of the author, but less prejudiced as to the limitations of the Johannine ideas. Despite then their evident value, the present essays cannot be considered an adequate account of John's Christology.

CHARLES DAVIS

(1) *Les Livres des Maccabées*, tr. and ed. F.-M. Abel, O.P., professeur à l'École Biblique (*Bible de Jérusalem*), Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1948. Pp. 176. (2) *Les Livres des Maccabées*, ed. M. Grandclaudon (*La Sainte Bible*, commencée sous la direction de Louis Pirot, continuée sous la

direction d'Albert Clamer : TOME VIII, 2^e partie), Letouzey et Ané, Paris 1951. Pp. 240.

It might be expected that Father Abel, the well-known geographer and historian of the École Biblique, would be entrusted with the translation of the *Books of Maccabees*. He has acquitted himself of this task in a commendable way. The book supplies a condensed introduction (14 pp.) and a fluent translation (85+66 pp.), provided with some critical (32+32) and explanatory (119+97) notes.

Father Abel takes together in the introduction what concerns both the books jointly : the title of the books, the canonicity, Josephus and the history of the Maccabees, the remembrance of the Maccabees among the Jews. After a short note about the (apocryphal) third and fourth *Books of Maccabees*, which belong to the Herodian period, he introduces in a similar way the two canonical books, dealing with the author, the religious character of the book, the nationalistic point of view (particular point of view and aim for II Macc.), literary characteristics (literary genre for II Macc.), historical value, the sources and date. The introduction ends with some notes regarding the two books, on the difficult question of the chronology, and on the text and versions.

Criticising the literary qualities of a translation in a foreign language requires a more thorough knowledge of that language than I can boast of regarding French. I therefore venture only to say that I have enjoyed this translation, admiring both the fluency of language and accuracy of the rendering. I wondered a few times whether the translation was not too literal, while on the other hand it seemed to me in some cases too free. Perhaps the golden mean for everybody's taste is not attainable in these matters. I was surprised, however, that Father Abel, who must have struggled so many times with the puzzling figures in the Bible, changed the 10,000 men of Judas into 1,000 (I Macc. IV.29), the 185,000 slain in I Macc. VII.41 into 85,000 and the 120,000 men of Antiochus VII Sidetes (the title of the section on p. 98 mentions Antiochus II instead of Antiochus VII) in I Macc. XV.13 into 100,000. I would prefer in II Macc. VI.2 the Greek name Zeus to the Latin Jupiter.

Though 216 explanatory notes on 151 pages may seem a considerable number, it is small in comparison with the other volumes of the *Bible de Jérusalem*. I would even say that Father Abel is too sparing. There are several pages without one single note. Some more elucidation would have enhanced the practical value of the book. I believe that Father Abel, who had the opportunity of devoting more than fifty years to the study of the Bible in its own environment, became so conversant with the sacred texts that he underestimated the difficulties

which they may give to less privileged readers. Most of the notes concern geography and history, in accordance with the character of the books and the speciality of the translator. There appear to be a few misprints. Thus we find "I Macc. I" (p. 119, note a) and "I Macc. II-IV" (p. 133, note a) instead of "IV Macc. I, II-IV", and bridges are turned into mountains (p. 155, note on II Macc. XII.13). That the forces of Jonathan were surprised by the ambuscade of Apollonius (p. 76, note a) seems to me not plainly in accord with the text: "Jonathan knew that there was an ambuscade behind him" (I Macc. X.80).

On the whole, this translation is really worthy of its place in the imposing series of substantial volumes and numerous articles which we owe to the pen of Father Abel whose death on 24 March this year will be regretted by all. May he rest in peace.

The translation with commentary by M. Grandclaudon was published in 1951, but it was completed a long time before, as the *Nihil obstat* (7 August 1948) and *Imprimatur* (16 August 1948) show; and the author remarks at the end of the introduction to I Macc., that he was unable to use the translation and commentary by Father Abel.

A separate introduction to I and II Macc. (15 + 20 pp.) deals in a clear and systematic way with the main problems concerning the books and provides a conveniently arranged bibliography. Special attention is paid to the question of the sources (for II Macc. regarding mainly the relationship with the work of Jason of Cyrene) and to the religious character of the books. Regarding II Macc., the preliminary letters and the historical character of the book, mainly in comparison with the parallel reports in I Macc., are thoroughly discussed. For the translation, the text-edition of Rahlfs was followed except for some passages.

M. Grandclaudon has apparently aimed at providing a readable translation. That is praiseworthy in itself, of course, but in my opinion he has taken liberties regarding the original which were not necessary. I had more than once the impression that the translation at times took over the task of the commentary. It may be advisable sometimes to replace a personal pronoun by a proper name, but is it so clear that e.g. in I Macc. VII.15 Bacchides is meant? It is impossible to maintain in a translation all the nuances of the original, but the way in which M. Grandclaudon fuses or flattens in places some expressions suggests to me that he is a little slipshod. I wonder why e.g. "in the plain" has not been rendered in I Macc. XI.68? What happened to the first part of I Macc. XIV.43, and what to I Macc. XV.29, and to the first part of I Macc. XV.39? Is "où ils s'arrêtèrent" an adequate translation of the end of I Macc. XI.73, and what is to be thought of the rendering of II Macc. III.30 and XIV.30? Why was "Palestine"

put in in II Macc. IV.4, instead of "Phoenicia", and why "Syrians" instead of "Tyrians" in II Macc. IV.49?

In the introduction to I Macc. (p. 17) M. Grandclaudon says that he assumes in the commentary, according to the opinion of Schürer, Knabenbauer, Lagrange and the majority of the commentators, the first of Nisan 312 as the starting-point of the Seleucid era. It is therefore all the more surprising that he calls the month Casleu, in I Macc. IV.52, the second instead of the ninth month, as the Greek text reads. In I Macc. VIII.15, he speaks of 330 senators, while the Greek text has 320. I cannot applaud his translation in I Macc. VI.53. It seems to me that, in accordance with the preceding events (I Macc. V.9-54), here the Jewish refugees from the pagan regions to Judaea are meant. The translation "*attacher après la citadelle*" in II Macc. XV.35 is to me rather puzzling. I believe that the Greek construction can be rendered by "to bind, fasten to".

The commentary is sound and substantial. It gives in pleasing style a good insight into the course of the historical events without losing sight of the religious and theological value of the texts. Maybe the author is inclined to reconcile the stories of I and II Macc. somehow at the cost of the particular traits and character of each of them. In the same way the explanation after the facts in II Macc. IX.29 seems to force the text. The author sees behind the young king Antiochus V Eupator his general Lysias, here as well as in I Macc. VI.62, and II Macc. XI.18. I wonder if an Oriental prince, even when still a boy by our standards, would allow his general to dominate him completely? That the men of Judas would have fasted on account of a feast-day (I Macc. III.17) seems to me rather improbable.

Summarising the five books of Jason was for the author of II Macc. a matter of sweat and night-watching (II Macc. II.26). I think the labour of translating and commenting an ancient text must be almost as hard. Therefore I congratulate M. Grandclaudon on his good translation and clear commentary, notwithstanding the few criticisms I have made. His book will help towards a better understanding of the *Books of Maccabees*, and is accordingly an important contribution towards a better knowledge of that period which may be called (for its theological as well as its historical character) a period of transition, preparing for the situation which we meet at the beginning of the New Testament era.

ANT. J. VAN DER VOORT, S.C.J.

St Joseph's College,
Malpas, Cheshire

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